

March 7, 2022

Senator Slap, Representative Elliott, and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

My name is Michelle Saindon, and I am a mathematics professor at Tunxis Community College and a Newington resident. I am writing in support of HB 5300 because I feel that oversight is needed to ensure that any closures or consolidations of our CT Community Colleges are in the best interest of the students they serve.

I have already seen a trend towards excessive local cutbacks at Tunxis. Each loss (such as our faculty secretary, our theatre and a secure campus that now has an open gate) seems too small to list here. But good morale and constant innovation have given way to uncertainty, lack of local control and mistrust.

The BOR has proven in many ways that they don't value the input of faculty. One example is the ACME policy which removes developmental education for our community college students. Although a list can be found with many faculty that were involved in the process (my name is listed) there is no indication that many were opposed, and that our opinions were ignored. Another example is the broad stroke that the BOR used to implement placement into math courses during Covid. They required the use of overall, self-reported high school GPA as the main measure of placement. When we responded with an innovative math placement and remediation student success platform created by UCONN (Stemify), the BOR gave us no financial or IT support in making it single sign on for the ease of our students. We work every day to make our admittance and policies as equitable as possible for students and we have not been supported. We have been burned time and time again by our good faith efforts to give input.

Benefits of consolidation such as seamless transfer, shared services, common courses and one student application to attend any community college can be achieved without consolidating. Consolidation has already created more managers that are not on campus where the students are. These managers are not interacting with students in any meaningful way.

We need your help, and we appreciate your time,

**Michelle Saindon**

Mathematics Professor

msaindon@tunxis.edu

860.773.1655

Tunxis Community College

271 Scott Swamp Road, Farmington, CT

[tunxis.edu](http://tunxis.edu)